IRAQ Cultural Awareness

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13th COSCOM G5

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AGENDA

- IRAQ ORIENTATION
- IRAQ-VUCA ENVIRONMENT
- NORTHERN IRAQ
- MIDDLE IRAQ
- SOUTHERN IRAQ
- GREETINGS AND GOODBYES
- DO’S AND DON’TS
- DRESS/RELIGION
- REVENGE AND HATE
- NEGOCIATIONS
- INTERPRETERS

Expedia
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UKRAINE
Kerch
RUSSIA
KALMYKIA
Nevinnomyssk
KAZAKHSTAN
Bucharest
Sarajevo
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Simferopol'
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Maykop
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Constanța
Tuapse
Black Sea
Sochi
Skopje
Varna
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GEORGIA
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Mediterranean Sea
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EŞFAHĀN
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Nā'īn
Damascus
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Banghāzī
Haifa
As Suwaydā'
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IRAN
IRAQ
Dezfūl
Jerusalem
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Manama
Sūhāj
D E S E R T
Red Sea
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EXPEDITIONS

IRAQ IS A “VUCA” ENVIRONMENT

- Volatile
- Uncertain
- Complex
- Ambiguous

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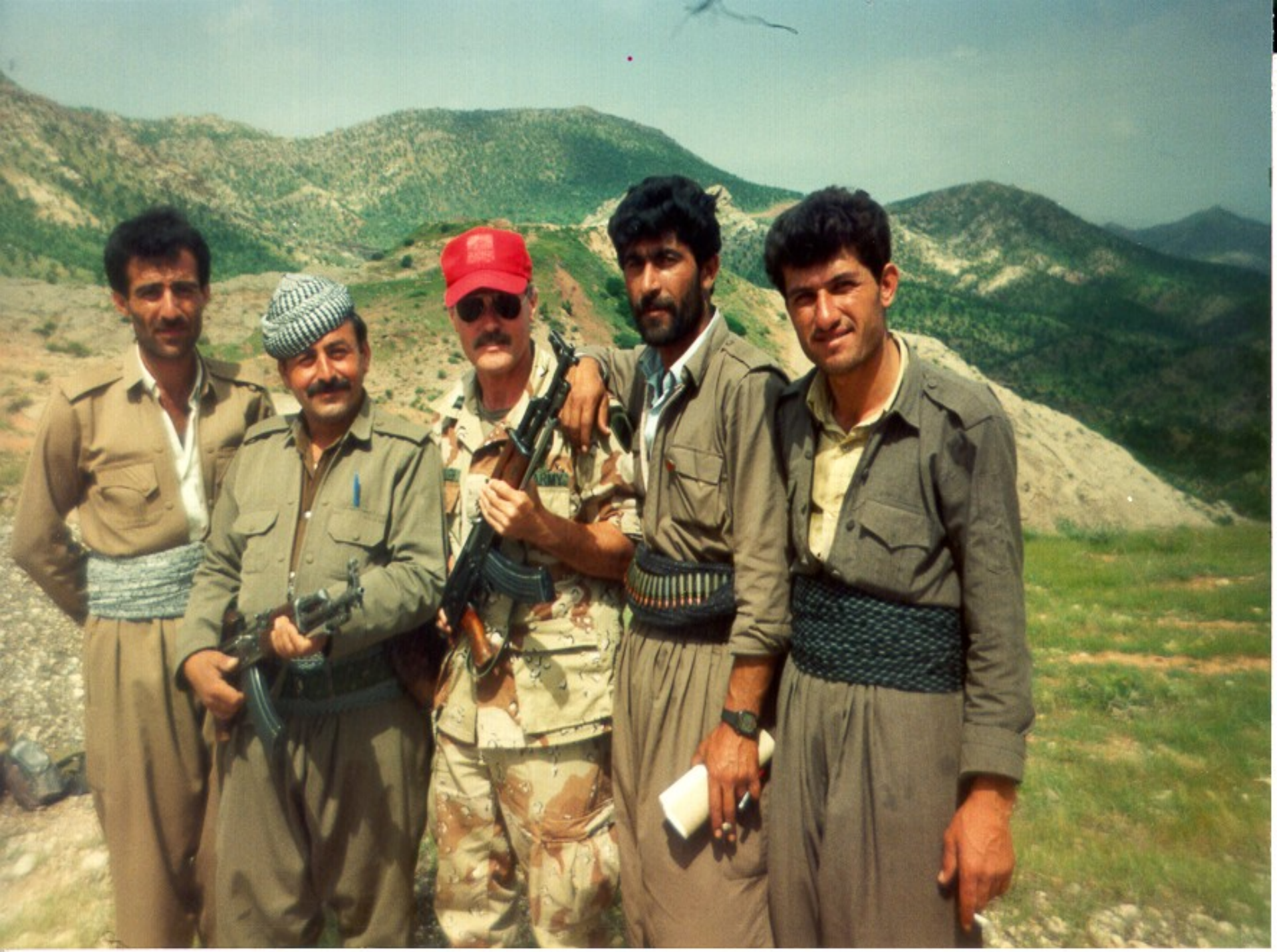

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EXPEDITIONS

BAGHDAD, IRAQ: RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS SOUTH OF TIGRIS

BAGHDAD, IRAQ: AL-JAMOURI STREET

BAGHDAD, IRAQ: IBN BUNNIEH MOSQUE NEAR THE BUS STATION

GREETINGS

- HELLO-ASSALAAM A’LAIKUM
- REPLY-WA A’LAIKUM ESSALAAM

FAREWELLS

- GOODBYE-MA-ASSALAAMA

DO AND DON'T'S

- SHOW RESPECT FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE
- SHAKE HAND WITH MEN TO SHOW FRIENDLINESS
- GREET/TALK TO MEN
- SHOW RESPECT AT RELIGIOUS SITES
- RESPECT RELIGIOUS LEADERS
- TREAT TRIBE LEADERS WITH DEFERENCE

DO’S AND DON’TS CONT.

- EAT FOOD IF OFFERED, EVEN IF !
- SHARE FOOD WITH LOCALS, IT GIVES YOU SECURITY
- DON’T TOUCH HOLY BOOKS
- DON’T APPEAR TOPLESS IN PUBLIC
- DON’T ENTER A MOSQUE WEARING SHOES
- DON’T STEP ON A GRAVE IN A CEMETERY

DO’S AND DON’TS

- DON’T LEAVE THE GUEST ROOM WHEN VISITING A HOUSE
- DON’T INSULT A MAN IN FRONT OF HIS WIFE AND FAMILIY
- DON’T MISUNDERSTAND SAME SEX KISSING
- DON’T OFFER OR RECEIVE FOOD/DRINKS WITH THE LEFT HAND

DRESS AND RELIGION

- SHIA/SUNNI
- WOMEN IN IRAQ SOCIETY

Source: The General Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

- **Muslims**
  - **Shi'is 60-65%**
  - **Sunnis 30-35%**
  - **Other 3%**
    - **Christians**
    - **Jews**
    - **Yezidis**

WOMEN IN IRAQ SOCIETY

- CERTAINLY NOT LIKE AMERICAN SOCIETY

JILBAB

Westernize

MODERN CONSERVATIVE

NIQAB

GESTURES

- GESTURES CAN SOMETIMES BE INSULTING

AMERICA AND IRAQ: "I DON'T KNOW."

AMERICA: “I got your nose” game played with

IRAQ: “F…”

IRAQ: “F… You!”

محمود ناصر ابو عامود

RUDE .....

IRAQ: “COME HERE.” (polite)

HOW TO: Right hand, palm down, move fingers back and forth

IRAQ: IF YOU MAKE A REQUEST FROM SOMEONE HE MAY RESPOND BY TOUCHING HIS RIGHT HAN TO HIS HEAD. THIS INDICATES "ALA RA'ASI." OR MY HEAD I WILL DO WHAT YOU ARE REQUESTIN

**IRAQ: GREETING A WOMAN: BECAUSE OF MODES
MAY NOT SHAKE YOUR HAND, BUT PUT HER HANI
HER HEART INSTEAD. YOU THEN PUT YOUR HANI
YOUR HEART TOO.**

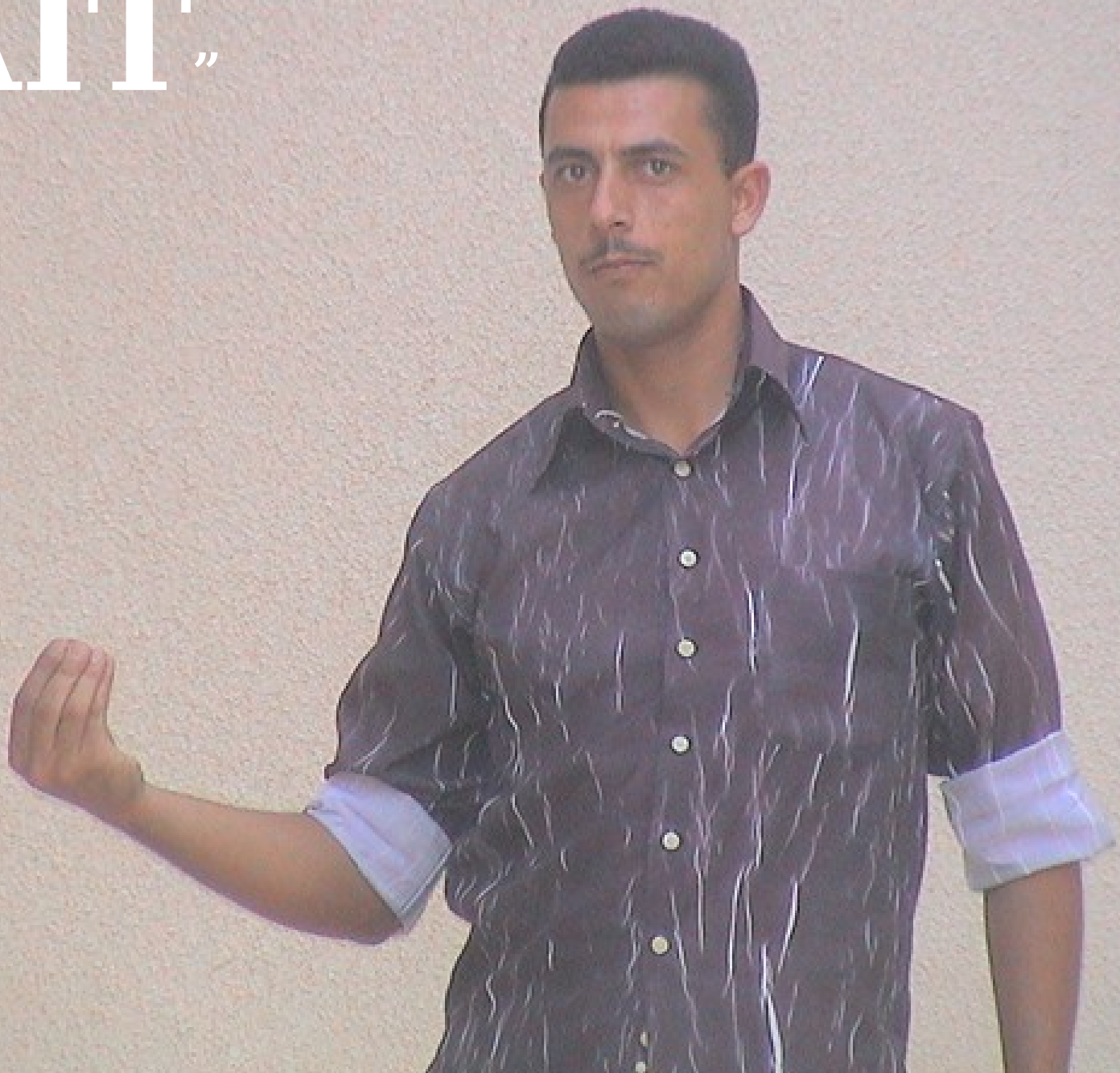
NORMAL

PEOPLE

(NOT GAYS)

BEGGING …PLEASE

“WAIT”



AMERICA: “STOP” NOT UNDERSTOOD

IRAQ: “STOP”

IRAQ: “F… You!”

AMERICA: Childish for "I don't like you."
IRAQ: Childish for "I don't like you."

AMERICA: “OK”; “Good

IRAQ: “I’ll <u>get</u> you later” (meaning is menacing)

AMERICA: normal gesture used

IRAQ: perceived as rude and threatening

U.S.ARMY

ZOELLER
ZOELLER

Food Customs

- Accept any invitation.
- Pray before eating
- Eat w/right hand
- Eat as a group (family meal)
- Eat w/out criticizing the food
- Eat from your side of the common dis
- Leave serious discussions for after me
- Food Important for celebrations
- Tea and Coffee important when receiving guests
- Praise the host when you finish
- Thank the host and wife (but not directly)
- Reciprocate the invitation

TRIBAL SOCIETY

- REVENGE AND HATE

Tribal Origins

- The tribal system developed due to the Arabic desert lifestyle, resulting in the sharing of food and water.
- Arabs had to look after each other to survive thus developing a strong brotherhood.
- Arabs to this day have a feeling of safety in numbers
- Arabs have developed intricate customs of hospitality to fellow tribesmen.

The Tribal Definition

- A social group
- Strong blood ties linking certain families
- The honor of the tribe is important
- Status within the tribe is important
- Size of the tribes vary, often measured in thousands.

The Tribal Definition

- The reputation of the tribe is paramount to all activities
- Needs of the Tribe come first
- Any activity which shames the tribe can affect the tribe for generations.

Duty

Each tribal member is bound to preserve the reputation of the tribe, to support each other and honor their respective tribal customs

NEGOCIATIONS

- WORKING WITH INTERPRETERS

Do your homework

- Has it been dealt with before ?
- What is the background/ history ?
- Read previous reports on the task.
- Who are the persons involved, name, personality, authority, religion, attitudes ?
- What are your options, limitations?
- When and where will the negotiation take place (get confirmation)?
- Establish an agenda for the meeting .

Approaching the site

- **Show minimum force necessary.**
- **Don’t point guns at them.**
- **Remove your sunglasses…..smile**

Opening Talks

- **Exchange small talk.**
- **Remember local habits ….respect them.**
- **Take your time and be patient.**
- **Use some Arabic friendly words.**

Main Talks

- Let your counterparts start.
- Listen to him, do not interrupt.
- Take notes, capture issues.
- Focus on the issues not on the person.
- Start to agree on the agenda.
- Negotiate details.
- Complete negotiation by repeating what has been agreed upon.
- Arrange for the next meeting / visit.
- Don’t forget final polite phrases.

Do’s and Don’ts during negotiation

- **Don’t tell jokes – they do not translate well.**
- **Don’t have side-bar conversations.**
- **Don’t discuss politics or religion.**
- **Don’t promise anything beyond your ability to control.**
- **Don’t look at your translator – look at your counterpart.**
- **Do maintain dignity and politeness.**
- **Do give time (i.e. be patient – “negotiations take time”)**

Planning Considerations

- Security
- Cultural awareness
- Impartiality
- Affiliation

How to work with interpreter

- In critical situation make sure that the interpreter understands you.
- Don’t ask interpreter opinion except for cultural issues.
- Dress code considerations.
- Watch interpreter for self questioning.

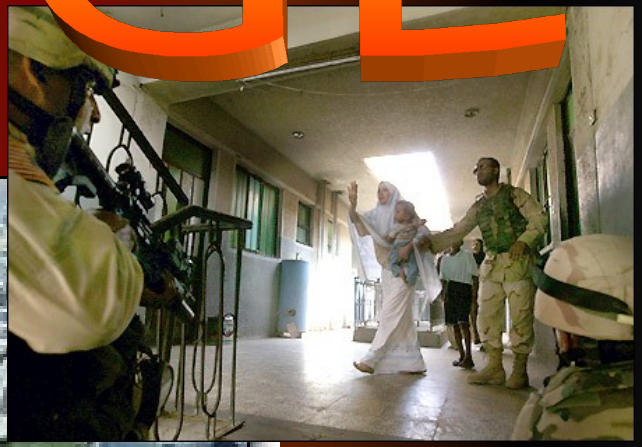
How to keep interpreter more honest

- ✓Watch interpreter for self questioning.
- ✓Using yes, no questions.
- ✓Watching voice inflection (to determine wither if something going on….).
- ✓Putting limits, interpreter isn’t to argue with people, he must say only thing that I says.
- ✓Using two interpreters, especially during sensitive meetings (to check in balance, also they can help each others).
- ✓Using some Arabic language they will appreciate that you are speaking their own language also it could be ice breaker.
- ✓Speak 2-3 sentences and stop.
- ✓Some English words don't translate to

HONOR AND SHAME

> Family Symbol.
> Symbol of Honor.
> Face Saving.

REVENGE



Revenge is a result of ignoring culture

QUESTIONS?

- HOW DO WE GET THERE?
- WHEN ITS 11:45 A.M. IN THE US WHAT TIME IS IT IN BAGDAD?
- ANSWER 08:45 P.M.